



FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Louisiana Recovery Office
1 Seine Court
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
CHANGE OF LOCATION AND REPAIR OF
CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE
JEFFERSON PARISH LOUISIANA
*FEMA-1603-DR-LA (HURRICANE KATRINA)***

Introduction

Hurricane Katrina, a strong hurricane with high wind and a destructive storm surge, made landfall on August 29, 2005, causing catastrophic damage to the coastal parishes of Louisiana. As a result of damages from Hurricane Katrina, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was authorized under Presidential disaster declaration FEMA-1603-DR-LA to provide federal assistance to designated disaster areas in Louisiana. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (PL 93288) Section 406 authorizes FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Program to provide financial and other forms of assistance to State and local governments to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following Presidentially declared disasters.

Congregation Beth Israel Community Synagogue has submitted an application for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program being administered in response to FEMA-1603-DR-LA. The Congregation Beth Israel Community Synagogue at 7000 Canal Boulevard, New Orleans, LA was significantly damaged by Hurricane Katrina's winds and flooding and was deemed eligible for grant funding to complete needed repairs to predisaster conditions. The applicant proposes to render the current facility safe and secure and construct a new building incorporating the functions and capacity of the previous facility at a new location in Jefferson Parish Louisiana at 4000 West Esplanade Avenue, Metairie, LA, approximately four miles west of the original location.

In accordance with 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared. The purpose of this EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the relocation and construction of the Congregation Beth Israel Community Synagogue and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Findings

The above described action would not result in any significant adverse impacts related to geology, soils, hydrology, floodplains, wetlands, water quality, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, state and federally listed threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), safety, security, noise, hazardous materials, toxic wastes, traffic, or transportation. Based on the information analyzed, FEMA has determined that the implementation of the proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts to the quality of the natural and human environment. The proposed alternative is not anticipated to have the potential for significant cumulative effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in accordance with 44 CFR Part 10.8 (d)(3)(x). As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10) and the proposed action as described in the EA may proceed.

CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Based upon the studies and consultations undertaken in this EA, several conditions must be met and mitigation measures must be taken by the applicant prior to and during project implementation.

- To minimize soil impacts, Congregation Beth Israel shall ensure contractors implement BMPs such as using silt fencing, covering stockpiled soils, mulching cleared areas and revegetating.
- A Storm Water Management Plan shall be prepared and BMP's for storm water management shall be implemented to minimize any detrimental effects to water quality during project implementation.
- Congregation Beth Israel is required to coordinate construction activities with the local floodplain administrator and comply with the local floodplain ordinance. All permits and certificates, and all the associated coordination, must be documented and provided to the GOHSEP and to FEMA as part of the permanent project file. The lowest floor of the new structure must be elevated or flood proofed to or above the base flood elevation. Future losses shall be eliminated, reduced or minimized by relocating building contents, materials and equipment to or above the BFE.
- Fill or borrow material used must be sourced from sites that do not contain any buried cultural materials (*i.e.*, wells, cisterns, foundations, basements, prehistoric Indian artifacts, human burials, and the like). If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, Congregation Beth Israel and/or its contractors must immediately stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize

harm to the finds. The Applicant and GOHSEP must inform the FEMA Public Assistance program, who would in turn contact the FEMA Historic Preservation staff. The Applicant must not proceed with work until FEMA completes consultation with the SHPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act is required. In that situation, the Applicant must notify the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours of the discovery, and notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at (225) 342-8170 within 72 hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize FEMA funding of the project.

- To minimize air quality impacts, Congregation Beth Israel and its contractors must implement BMPs to limit air emissions, fugitive dust and exhaust. BMPs would include maintaining and covering spoil piles, covering the loads of haul vehicles and keeping construction equipment properly tuned.
- Construction traffic must be monitored for potential traffic safety incidents and suitable traffic control measures shall be taken by Congregation Beth Israel and their contractors as needed.
- Congregation Beth Israel and its contractors must ensure all project activities are conducted in a safe manner and in compliance with all state and federal occupational safety regulations, including OSHA, to protect workers and the general public.
- Project construction would involve the use of potentially hazardous materials (e.g., petroleum products, cement, caustics, acids, solvents, paint, electronic components, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, treated timber) and may result in the generation of small volumes of hazardous wastes. Appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control spills of hazardous materials must be taken and generated hazardous and non-hazardous wastes are required to be disposed in accordance with applicable federal, state and local regulations.
- If hazardous constituents are unexpectedly encountered, appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation, and management of the contamination must be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state and local regulations.
- The project has been found by the LDNR to be inside the Louisiana Coastal Zone; therefore, they require that a complete Coastal Use Permit Application package (Joint Application Form, locality maps, project illustration plats with plan and cross section views, etc.) along with the appropriate application fee be submitted to their office prior to construction. Additionally, the area where the project is located is all or part of the aboriginal homelands of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana and as such large villages, burial sites, and sacred sites were in place in that entire area. If at any time during the course of work, any traditional cultural properties are discovered, the Applicant must immediately contact Kimberly S.

Walden (LDNR Cultural Director) or Melanie Aymond (LDNR Research Coordinator) at (337) 923-9923 or (337) 923-4395 or their designated official alternate.

Approvals:

Jomar Maldonado, Environmental Officer
Washington, DC
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA

Date

Joseph Threat, Interim Director
Louisiana Recovery Office
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA

Date